

Lebanese International Business Network

This report contains several documents associated with the planning and implementation of the Lebanese International Business Network (LIBN). The Indevco Foundation has assumed responsibility for LIBN, and has renamed it Lebanese International Network (LIN)

Prepared By:
**SRI International
Lebanese American University**

Project Funded By:
USAID/Lebanon

July 2000

LIBN – Lebanese International Business Network

Implementation Plan

SRI International
July 2000

This implementation plan outlines a strategy for establishing LIBN – the Lebanese International Business Network. LIBN is a new initiative to identify, develop and energize a network of Lebanese entrepreneurs, focusing on productive linkages with the Lebanese Diaspora. The key step in this initiative is to craft and implement an on-line interactive system and database of business contacts and links, in order to nurture business opportunities between Lebanese businesses and professionals overseas and private firms in Lebanon. This implementation plan includes the following sections.

Background and Purpose of LIBN
Components, Services and Benefits to Users
Organizational Structure of Website and database
Administration, Potential Hosts
Next Steps for Implementation
Annex

A. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF LIBN

Business leaders agree that Lebanon's economy is most likely to achieve sustainable accelerated growth if key private sector industries look beyond the country's small domestic market and seek broader opportunities in regional and global markets. Among industries best positioned to expand regionally is Lebanon's financial and business services sector. Lebanon's financial sector once served as a key banking center for the region. Now, Lebanon has a chance to play a new role as a regional center, reflecting recent changes in the regional and global environment. Strong opportunities exist to develop as a center for wider business services, including banking, insurance and other financial services, as well as regional accounting, publishing, advertising, media and related business services.

To develop as a regional business services center, industry stakeholders have identified several key initiatives that are critical for the sector to undertake. Some are beginning to be implemented, following a series of studies and industry cluster workshops conducted by SRI International and Lebanese American University, with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development. Initiatives identified for implementation, and which are planned to be overseen by an industry task force, include human resources development, information technology improvements, corporate management training, corporate re-structuring and consolidation, industry diagnostics and policy reform advocacy. Finally, new efforts to build international business links and develop regional and global business opportunities, are the purpose of this initiative.

In order to tap into international business opportunities most effectively, new efforts are needed to help Lebanese firms “re-connect” to a rapidly globalizing international business network. To systematize existing links with overseas Lebanese, and develop them into a more practical business development tool, this initiative proposes to build a comprehensive, accessible, on-line network of international business contacts and opportunities – the Lebanese International Business Network., or LIBN. Its overall objective is to improve the competitiveness of Lebanon’s financial and business services sector, and of Lebanon itself.

LIBN’s Purpose:

The purpose of LIBN is to provide an interactive system and database to assist entrepreneurs and firms in Lebanon to establish productive business linkages with their overseas Lebanese counterparts.

LIBN will nurture business links between local and overseas Lebanese using a dynamic, interactive database and search system for business matchmaking. It will help develop international links between Lebanese private sector firms and Lebanese expatriate nationals abroad to introduce more Lebanese firms to international financial/business opportunities, including specific sales transactions, strategic alliances, joint ventures, and related partnerships.

LIBN will focus on developing a more formal and substantive Lebanese international network than currently exists via the Internet for the purpose of business opportunity matchmaking inside and outside of Lebanon. It will act as a clearinghouse for current and new networks and databases of Lebanese expatriate professionals overseas and private firms in Lebanon, allowing all users to expand contacts and identify and act on business opportunities.

Why This Initiative?

Lebanon is fortunate in already having an exceptionally large number of overseas Lebanese professionals active in financial and business services. They form an extremely valuable link for Lebanon to gain access to many resource areas that critically affect competitiveness and unfortunately deteriorated considerably in Lebanon over the war years. These areas for productive linkages can provide Lebanese firms with the following, among others:

- State-of-the-art expertise on modern management techniques;
- Access to new production and information technologies;
- Intelligence on export requirements and new export opportunities;
- Access to new markets overseas, through formal or informal alliances;
- Reduced costs for international representation and marketing; and
- Strategic alliances in a wide range of business areas.

Unfortunately, current Lebanese networks tend to be relatively restricted, often limited to a family-run business or single professional association. These networks are frequently not organized in a practical, easily accessible form. Many on-line websites related to business and to overseas Lebanese already exist. But many are simply directories, or lists of members, with few if any interactive matchmaking services provided. To date, no other website related to Lebanon operates with the main purpose of LIBN – to be an interactive, dynamic and comprehensive site for the express purpose of identifying business matchmaking opportunities.

Related efforts

Sites about Lebanon and overseas Lebanese have proliferated since the mid-1990s, both in Lebanon and overseas, particularly in the U.S. and Canada. Rather than simplifying business contacts, however, the growing number of sites makes searching more complicated. Moreover, while many "hotlinks" to Lebanese sites exist, no single major directory of business opportunities exists. Most current websites fall into one of two categories:

- (1) Those that provide commercially-oriented services promoting tourism attractions, travel agency services, cultural attractions, publications, and increasingly, commercial e-business (e.g. Lebanon.com, Lebanon Links); or
- (2) Those which are sites for various types of associations – professional, business, student, alumni, cultural – in countries worldwide, but with the majority based in North America (United States and Canada).

Within both sets of sites, some sites (e.g., Lebanon.com) are more comprehensive, interactive and better maintained and updated than others. Nevertheless, few if any share LIBN's main purpose of business matchmaking.

Current efforts to tap the expertise of overseas Lebanese for technical assistance are carried out on a relatively informal or limited basis. Many contacts depend largely on family networks, and mainly benefit family-owned and managed institutions with well-placed members overseas. The only organized service matching up local needs for technical assistance with expatriate skills is the UNDP/CDR program TOKTEN (Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals). This is a relatively small-scale program, having placed about fifty or so expatriate volunteer consultants over the past four years. Assistance has been limited to public agencies. Plans are being made to extend this program to private sector firms, but primarily helping small and medium enterprises, initially those operating in the information technology sector.

What LIBN Will Offer

The new LIBN initiative will help organize the energies and value of the expatriate Lebanese in two main ways. First, it will provide a venue for more formally organizing the broad and diverse – but loosely-connected – network of expatriates abroad, by acting

as a clearinghouse of links to databases of Lebanese professionals overseas in financial and related services and by developing its own new databases. Second, it will actively encourage business matchmaking among a wide range of entrepreneurs and private sector companies.

Moreover, LIBN will be structurally designed to be a simple but dynamically interactive site. It will feature a registration process intended to facilitate automatic, immediate updating of database listings.

LIBN will use as organizational models current commercial websites which are most active in on-line “e-commerce.” These will include major sites involved in matching buyers and sellers of personal goods and services, as well as government-sponsored websites providing statistics on trading conditions internationally and offering matchmaking services (see Annex).

B. COMPONENTS, SERVICES AND BENEFITS TO USERS

In view of the explosion of both “strategic alliances” and internet-based information and networking, LIBN may eventually grow to encompass a wide range of activities. However, to maximize feasibility and start-up prospects, it is proposed that LIBN initially be limited to two core components: (1) Providing a central site or “clearinghouse” of links to relevant Web sites; and (2) offering an interactive Internet venue for a voluntary network of Lebanese (in Lebanon and overseas) for purposes of business matchmaking.

1. Central Clearinghouse of Internet/Web links

This component will be relatively simple but nevertheless important – providing an organized site for entrepreneurs to go to find information on and contact points for relevant organizations in financial and business services and related sectors in Lebanon, and to locate relevant sites abroad. Sites abroad will include both those related to Lebanese overseas, and those related to the financial and business services sectors in major overseas markets. The main purpose is to provide easily accessible contact information on specific business associations, through which LIBN users can directly contact member companies regarding business opportunities. Examples of the categories of sites and specific sites within them are presented below. These are partial listings and are by no means inclusive.

- **Sites of Lebanese Business and Related Associations in Lebanon**

- Aley Assembly of Industrialists and Traders
 - American Chamber of Commerce in Lebanon
 - Association des Commerçants de Beyrouth
 - Association of Banks in Lebanon
 - Association of Lebanese Industrialists
 - Chamber of Commerce and Industry

EAN Lebanon
Institute of Finance
Insurance Companies Association in Lebanon
International Chamber of Commerce
Investment Development Authority of Lebanon
Lebanese American Business Association
Ministry Of Economy & Trade
North Lebanon Bar Association
Professional Computer Association
Rassemblement de Dirigeants et Chefs Libanais
Sustainable Development Networking Program
Tokten Mechanism

- **Sites of Lebanese Business and Related Associations Abroad**

American Lebanese Engineering Society, ALES
Arab American Business and Professional Association
Hariri Foundation, USA
LAPSNET: Lebanese American Professional Society Network
Lebanon Index Homepage - Internet Traders SARL
Lebanon Links Business Organizations
Levantine Engineers' Society
List of Lebanese Traders
National U.S. – Arab Chamber of Commerce
The Lebanese Engineers
Union of Arab Chambers of Commerce
Who's Who of the Lebanese Emigrants in the World

- **Links to Related Lebanese and Middle East Web Sites.** Included will be related industry and professional associations, universities, alumni associations, foundations, and Lebanese community and cultural organizations abroad. In addition to function, sites also will be categorized, where useful, by country, region, and city of major Lebanese trading partners. The following examples provide partial listings.

American Arab Scientific Society Home Page
Arab Business Directory
Arab Center in Washington
Arab World Online
Arab World Online
Arab-American Guide
ArabNet
ArabNet Lebanon
ArabNet MidEast Internat Directory/Company Listings
Business @ Lebanon.com
Egypt Online

Egypt/Mid East sites
 Gulfnet International
 Gulfnet Kuwait
 Institute du Monde Arabe
 Indevco
 Lebanese Network
 Lebanese Students Society of McGill University
 Lebanese White Pages
 Lebanon - Al Mashriq
 Lebanon GenWeb - who's who of Lebanese emigrants, surname queries
 Lebanon Invest
 Lebanon Links
 Lebanon WWW Server
 Lebanon.com Online Resources
 Lebanon2C.com
 LebHost - Lebanon's Premier Search Engine
 MENA Business Page (Middle East North Africa)
 Middle East Resource Center
 Midwest Federation of American Syrian-Lebanese Clubs
 Organization of Arab Students at Purdue
 Penn Arab Student Society
 Southren Federation of Syrian-Lebanese Clubs
 The Arab Society of Princeton
 The ARAB STUDENT UNION at The University of Toledo in Ohio
 The GTPN Middle East
 The Lebanese Club at MIT
 The Society of Arab Students at Harvard University
 Toronto AUB Alumni Association
 Trade Point Cairo
 UCLA Lebanese Cultural Society
 UCLA LEBANESE Cultural Society
 World Lebanese Cultural Union - California

2. Lebanese Business Network

This component will consist of an Internet-based venue to energize an active network of Lebanese entrepreneurs, working together to promote the expansion of Lebanese regional/international business and financial services.

This matchmaking function will be the major service offered by LIBN. It will match up overseas Lebanese firms and individuals with opportunities in Lebanon and overseas. The concept is to build a Lebanese network through voluntary registration. To become users of LIBN, individuals will be asked to provide certain information (e.g., contact information, industry involved, business interests, and linkages sought). The system would then match these interests with those listed by other Lebanese

registrants, both in Lebanon and overseas. This will in effect create a “marketplace” of Lebanese entrepreneurs. The registration information could include the following:

□ **Industry/sub-sector categories:**

- Accounting
- Advertising
- Banking, commercial
- Computers/information Technology
- Insurance
- Investment banking
- Law firms
- Management consultancies
- Media services, broadcasting
- Non-bank financial institution
- Promotion/marketing
- Publishing
- Telecommunications
- Trading companies, export/import services
- Transportation/shipping, air/sea/land freight

□ **Contact Information**

- Name
- Company name and address
- Email address
- Website
- Related contact information (see registration form below)

□ **Company Profile:**

- Industry,
- Products/services,
- Branches/joint ventures (in Lebanon, internationally)
- Other commercial information, where relevant (e.g., annual exports, annual sales, number of employees, etc.)

□ **Business Opportunities Offered or Sought**

Business opportunities sought will be listed under the categories listed below, with additional space provided to describe in further detail the nature of business opportunities desired or offered:

- Advertising/media services
- Agents
- Business alliances

- Distributors
 - Joint venture partners
 - Licensing/franchising
 - Market information
 - Other trade and investment opportunities
 - Technical assistance/training
 - Technical suppliers
 - Trade/investment regulations
 - Trading companies
- On the registration form, additional space will be provided for each company/individual to provide a detailed description of business opportunities desired or offered

Additional Services and Benefits

In addition to the matchmaking and hotlinks services provided by LIBN, additional services and benefits will include:

- **An expanded database** of Lebanese professionals abroad and private sector firms in Lebanon interested in business opportunities
- **Stronger international links** between private sector firms in Lebanon and Lebanese expatriates overseas on a formal basis at the level of industries or sectors, extending beyond current family or corporate connections
- **Cooperation with other related websites** to share data and assist in their development. Other sites could include those such as the UNDP Tokten program, and other efforts of Lebanese government agencies such as CDR, as well as related programs supported by the World Bank, such as the planned Small Business Facility Initiative. Coordination would more effectively help match up expatriate professionals with local needs for training and technical assistance.
- **Coordination with other initiatives to improve Lebanon's image** internationally, and promote Lebanese goods and services abroad.

C. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF WEBSITE AND DATABASE

Website Structure

LIBN's website structure will be modelled on prominent current examples of "buyer/seller" websites which have established themselves as commercially successful, and which match together buyers and sellers of goods and services (e.g., U.S.-based website "eBay", "eTrade"). Other models will include statistical and trade-related sites

providing interactive services on business opportunities (e.g., U.S. Commerce Department STAT-USA, NTDB).

Registration System

Registration will be required for all companies and individuals who wish to access the database of entrepreneurs, companies and business opportunities. Only after supplying this information will each user will be provided a user name and password to access the database and business opportunities listed.

Automatic Database Updating

Each new registrant will be added automatically to the full database, minimizing maintenance and “manual” updating. The registration system will allow an automatic screening process by which the database will only include registrants who fully complete the form and provide all contact information required, as well as an indication of business opportunities desired. The system could include a feature in which registrants’ information will be eliminated unless it is updated or confirmed on a regular basis.

LIBN Proposed Registration Form (draft)

How to Register. To register, follow the registration process below. When you complete all three steps, you can begin accessing the database on business opportunities and other links.

- 1) Complete the Initial Registration Form - Simply fill out the registration form below, review your information for accuracy, and click the Submit button.
- 2) Receive Confirmation Instructions - LIBN will send you an e-mail message with a confirmation code.
- 3) Confirm Your Registration - Once you have your access code (and your email address), complete your registration by accepting the LIBN User Agreement.

Please fill out the information below and click the continue button.
Required entries are shown in (color).

Company name_____

Contact name_____ (e.g. John H. Doe)

Please include your given name, middle initial, and family name

Position / title_____ (e.g., Marketing Manager)

E-mail address _____ (e.g., username@aol.com)

Company Web Site URL_____
(e.g., www.LebanonCompany.com.lb)

Company Address

City_____

Country_____

Postal Code_____

Primary Phone_____

Include your country code and city code or area code_____

Secondary phone number_____

Fax number_____

Optional Information: Please provide the following information to allow us to respond better to your needs:

Company name: _____

Major products/services: _____

Annual sales (range): _____

Annual exports (average annual value): _____

Major export destinations: _____

How did you first hear about LIBN?

If a friend referred you to LIBN, please enter your friend's email address:

Are you interested in participating in a LIBN survey?

LIBN will not exchange or sell your registration contact information. Your registration is confidential and is for use only in conjunction with LIBN. (LIBN User Agreement to be drafted).

Business Opportunities Offered or Sought

Please list the business linkage or opportunities you offer or seek. LIBN will then draw upon its database to present to you individuals and firms that may meet your needs. You can then contact them personally and privately to discuss a possible business arrangement.

	<u>Offered</u>	<u>Sought</u>
Advertising/media services	_____	_____
Agents	_____	_____
Business alliances	_____	_____
Distributors	_____	_____
Joint venture partners	_____	_____
Licensing/franchising	_____	_____
Market information	_____	_____
Other trade and investment opportunities	_____	_____
Technical assistance/training	_____	_____
Technical suppliers	_____	_____
Trade/investment regulations	_____	_____
Trading companies	_____	_____

D. ADMINISTRATION AND MARKETING

Administration/Hosting

Technical specifications for the LIBN website, based on this implementation plan, will be developed by a local contractor/individual in Lebanon with wide relevant experience in website design and related technical issues. In designing the technical specifications and database content the developer will work in close cooperation with a hosting organization familiar with private sector business conditions, particularly financial and business services, both in Lebanon and internationally.

After full completion of the technical specifications and development of the initial database content, it is envisioned that the hosting and ongoing maintenance (designed to be minimal) would be provided by either a Lebanese business association (e.g., Association of Banks in Lebanon), or a local university (e.g., Lebanese American University), or a Lebanese foundation, (e.g., the Indevco Foundation). Preferably, a single organization will take on both the hosting and maintenance function. Funding options might involve one or more organizations.

Marketing

Clearly the success of the matchmaking component of LIBN will depend on the number of Lebanese who participate in it. The development of a web site with hot links to various business or other relevant sites is relatively simple and requires little in the way of marketing. However, the matchmaking system and database must encourage individuals/firms to register and participate.

Web-based commerce or related interactions must address and deal directly with potential concerns over individual privacy. For several reasons which need not be discussed here, the Lebanese place a high priority on privacy, both personal and professional. Therefore, LIBN's matchmaking activity will have to incorporate careful design and effective marketing.

While the Lebanese value privacy, they also value entrepreneurship and they tend to be more technology/computer literate than many other national groups. Accordingly, LIBN can be seen and should be marketed as a means to "enable" and expand Lebanese entrepreneurship through the application of technology.

An effective marketing plan needs to be developed. The most likely initial strategy would be to enlist the endorsement and participation of leading business and other private sector membership organizations (e.g., overseas bi-national committees, alumni groups, etc.). These organizations would be asked to distribute LIBN flyers or promotional brochures to their members, and/or invite LIBN host personnel to describe the service during regular meetings. It might be useful to establish an informal or formal set of "institutional supporters" of LIBN to provide credibility and an outreach base.

Additional marketing efforts could include the dissemination of LIBN brochures through overseas Lebanese offices (trade, investment, tourism, etc.), embassies and consulates, and bi-lateral chambers of commerce. The goal would be to build momentum to support the development of a dynamic, expanding group of Lebanese – in Lebanon and overseas – working to re-integrate Lebanon into the global economy.

E. NEXT STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- **Identify and confirm host organization and tentative funding.**
(e.g., Indevco Foundation, Lebanese American University, ABL, etc.)
- **Collaborate with host organization** to finalize web site concept and content.
- **Agree on specifications and costs** for hosting and maintenance.
- **Agree on funding sources** for initial and medium-term budget.
- **Contract private local technology firm (if necessary)** to develop technical specifications of web site.
- **Continue coordinating with host organization** on start-up, marketing, funding and additional development of LIBN with close cooperation of private sector organizations, including related initiatives of financial and business services sector, e.g., the Lebanese Services Industry Task Force.

ANNEX A

The following list provides examples of online sites providing international trade leads and related business opportunities offered and desired, which can serve as models or samples for the design of technical specifications and substantive content for LIBN:

A-1 Tradeexpress International

Australian import export lead system

Alliance of Global Business Exchanges

BIDWORLD.COM

Posting site for bids.

Brazilian Trade Leads

Trade leads from the Brazilian Embassy in Washington, DC; The Brazilian Government Trade Board in New York City; and the United Nations Electronic Trade Opportunity System.

Business Networks International Inc.

Focus on international business. This site hosts business profiles of more than 400 companies from 57 countries. Member companies are seeking new business relationships with related companies.

Business Page - International, The

**Charlotte's Web - Interactive International Trade
Bulletin Board**

Commercial News USA

CNU\$A is the place where American exporters meet importers from around the world to establish successful business relationships.

DejaNews Search engine of leads and postings on newsgroups.

Eureka

Europe-wide Network for Industrial R&D; promotes pan-European, market oriented research and development across Europe.

Expo Markt

Export Hotline & TradeBank Online

Export/Import Discussion Group

The Export/Import discussion Group is a non-profit, Minnesota corporation dedicated to the education, networking and international trade issues of its members.

Fortuna

International trade recruiting information system. Includes job listings and resume posting.

Global Trade Center

International trade leads exchange

G2's Commerce Business Daily - Free Trial

The Commerce Business Daily (CBD) lists notices of proposed government procurement actions, contract awards, sales of government property, and other procurement information. A new edition of the CBD is issued every business day.

Global Business eXchange®

The GBX promotion program offers you the placement of a text only business opportunity (buy, sell, invest, partnership, etc.) representing your company into our searchable database.

Global Business Forum

The Global Business Forum is a separate fee based online service dedicated to promote the export or import of products in the international marketplace. Daily trade monitoring of several well established worldwide trading systems for "Offers to Buy"

Global Entrepreneurs Network,

The GEN, the Global Entrepreneurs Network, is a rapidly growing membership organization offering unsurpassed Internet hosting services to businesses and entrepreneurs worldwide. Currently over 5000 businesses, small and large from over 50 countries.

Global Marketplace**Global On-Line Directory**

Global On-Line offers you your own page on the Internet to advertise your company, organization or even yourself - your services, news releases, archives W3 pages or whatever. And all completely free!

Global Trade Network

Pacific InterVest, Inc. is a private Asian market development corporation. The company was founded in 1991.

Global Trade Point Development Centre

An initiative of the United Nations Trade Point Development Centre (UNTPDC) to provide standards, software and opportunities for trade lead dissemination particularly to small businesses in less developed nations.

Global Traders Association

This service provides Importers, Exporters, Buyers, Sellers and International Traders the opportunity to 'meet, while having access to the information and services required to conclude a mutually beneficial transaction.

IBEX

Global Business Alliance has introduced IBEX, a revolutionary new electronic commerce service that will help companies find, qualify, and negotiate with prospective business partners.

IMEX Exchange

International import export business exchange.

Int'l Business Forum

Business opportunities and contacts in the international marketplace, forum is intended for companies wishing to export or expand into foreign markets.

International TradeNET**Import-Export Bulletin Board**

Posting of offers to buy or sell.

The International Traders Import/Export Classifieds Connection**Internet Tradeline**

Internet Tradeline, Inc. (ITI) provides an electronic solution to facilitate commerce for businesses of all sizes, both spontaneously, with new clients¹ and on a regular basis, with existing clients. ITI aims to serve as a single outsourcing agent, provid

IntlTrade Zone, The

Free postings on site. Subscribe to "Russia Trade".

Intertrade Mercantile Exchange, Inc.

Intertrade Mercantile Exchange (incorporated) is a global, electronically operated exchange for goods and services. It provides a controlled-value trading structure, which enables buying or selling independent of any direct, opposite number to trade.

Ireland's Rexco List

Links to free and paid for sources of Trade Leads from all over the globe. Compliments of Rexco, New York based information broker and trade lead monitoring specialists.

The North American Association For Exports To Eastern Europe

N.A.A.F.E.T.E.E. will supply you with business leads and other helpful information to close deals in Eastern Europe.

NAFTA.net**National Trade Databank**

Extensive and comprehensive list of trades leads generated by U.S. government. Minimal fee required for complete access to data but well worth it.

Netsource America

Netsource TradeCenter is trade leads for North, South, and Central America.. The TradeCenter displays import inquiries and export offers posted by world traders during the past week. There is no charge for posting messages to this list.

On-Line Trader

Welcome to On-Line Trader, Home of the Real Deal. We are the international trade clearinghouse for commodities, liquidated, closeout and surplus merchandise, government seized merchandise1 export items and manufacturers overruns.

PangaeaNet TM Trade Leads

A comprehensive global business resource center, including, news, Trends, trade leads, databases and more.

PRONET International Net Directory

Direct access to thousands of Online companies from around the world. Search company names, capabilities, countries, cities and more. At Pronet, we are dedicated to delivering tools designed to meet the demands of business on-line.

Software Export Guide

Hints, tips, resources and advice for software companies in international markets.

STAT-USA

Search for products and services. At the end of each report are lists of names and addresses of foreign companies wanted to do business.

Trade Compass

Provides on-line services to international business including, news, electronic commerce, logistics management, searchable databases, and travel services.

Trade Compliance Center

U.S. Department of Commerce - monitors and evaluates foreign compliance with trade agreements. Provides information about rights and obligations existing under active trade agreements between the U.S. and other nations.

TradeUS

Free Trade Leads plus Commercial and Government Information for companies who want to trade with the US.

Tenders Electronic Daily**TH®I Import**

Posting systems that requests a portion of deals concluded using their system.

Trade Center**Trade Compass - Trade Broker**

Thousands of trade leads each week. Post your trade lead. Search engine available.

Trade Match

TradeMatch assists companies to benefit from international trade opportunities through new markets, partners and customers overseas.

Trade Net - Online: Canada

Real time trading board available. Canadian connections.

Trade Point USA

Trade Point USA is a non-profit trade information and services company established in cooperation with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Trade UK

Trade UK has been set up for companies outside the UK who want to either export to or import from the UK and for UK Companies who want to make contact (Trade Leads).

TradeMatch Home Page**TradeNet World Service**

A membership organization comprised of more than 8,000 professional importers and exporters located in virtually every country around the world.

TradePort

Comprehensive international market and industry information for shippers and trade companies. Includes leads, an events calendar, an interactive tutorial, and glossaries and reference guides.

Tradescope Home Page

A bulletin board listing trade leads, marketing information and other useful information for international trade.

Tradewatch International Business Directory**Tradewinds**

TRADE is a daily (5 day per week) publication devoted to the worldwide distribution of commercial advertising exclusively for businesses engaged in the wholesale buying/selling of large merchandise and commodities internationally.

Unibex

Unibex is a comprehensive1 easy to use, secure and affordable business-to-business electronic commerce service available to organizations of all sizes throughout the "orid. Unibex is accessible principally through the Internet's World Wide Web but can al

Used Equipment Network

The Used Equipment Network lists over 50,000 items that are currently for sale by used machinery and equipment dealers. Although most of these items are in the areas of metalworking, chemical/process, electrical, and material handling, the other sections

Web Trade

Buy and sell most anything on the World-Wide Web. Offering FREE and SUBSCRIPTION classified ads.

World Trade Center Network

This electronic trading and communications service connects you to over 200 World Trade Centers - and to more than 2,000 of their clients and affiliates. whatever you have to buy or sell1 NETWORK allows you to advertise it in seconds around the world.

World Trade Exchange

Connecting Buyers and Sellers from around the world, with the information and tools they need to Conduct Business.

World Trade Markets

World Trade Markets in cooperation with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) have adapted the WUM renowned Trade/SEARCH system to cater for the capturing, dissemination and searching of Trade Point Trade Leads

ANNEX B

Additional Technical Points Regarding LIBN Website Development, Project Phasing and Budget Estimates

This appendix to the LIBN Letter of Agreement between the Indevco Foundation and SRI International sets out additional technical points agreed to regarding LIBN website development, project phasing, budget estimates, marketing and website launching, which are to be added to the LIBN Implementation Plan.

LIBN Website Development

The following additional technical points have been agreed to between the Indevco Foundation and SRI International regarding the LIBN website:

- **Indevco/LARS collaboration:** The Indevco Foundation and the Lebanese American Reintegration Society (LARS) will collaborate by agreeing to locate the new LIBN business network site within the existing LARS website. Indevco will focus on developing and maintaining the business network site, while LARS will focus on maintaining its social support information site. Each site will be equally prominent in appearance on the website homepage. The “business” and “social” information sites will be intended to help complement each other and thereby attract wider audiences.
- **Name of the website:** “Lebanese International Network” will be the new name of the current LARS website when LIBN is incorporated into it. Under this name on the homepage will appear both the LIBN business network site and the current LARS social support site.
- **Organizational Identity to be maintained:** Under the overall website name, each site will appear equally prominently. Each will have its own URL, and be separately accessible, allowing users to view either site. .
- **“Sponsor” names:** Both the Indevco Foundation and LARS can be listed as “sponsors,” while USAID can be listed as a “founding sponsor” initially. SRI International reserves the right to be listed or not listed as a sponsor.
- **LIBN Advisory Board:** The LIBN site will have an advisory board consisting of twelve members including representatives of prominent Lebanese business associations and of the Indevco Foundation. The role of the board will be primarily to provide advice regarding business “networking” issues and to promote LIBN among member companies of the business associations and abroad where possible. Decisions affecting LIBN content will be decided by the Indevco Foundation in collaboration with LARS.

- **Technical issues:** Additional technical issues affecting the overall website and homepage, such as graphic user interface design, and advertising structure, are to be agreed on between the Indevco Foundation and LARS.

Project Phasing and Budget Estimates

A specific timeline setting out dates for project phases will be developed and implemented following agreement between SRI and Indevco Foundation, as well as Indevco Foundation and LARS. The following phases are not mutually exclusive; a number of activities can and should be occurring simultaneously.

Phase 1 focuses on hiring new personnel or assigning current Indevco personnel to work on LIN/LIBN:

A ***content expert*** will oversee information design and update content on the site, ensure quality of entries submitted to LIBN, conduct research for expanding the business and social sections of the site, prepare and implement an international marketing plan, and work directly with members of the Executive Committee. This position requires a Masters degree, previous experience in Information Design and online research, and excellent writing skills in English. The level of effort for the content expert should be to work in-house 2 days per week with a salary of \$700/month, equivalent to \$8,400 annually.

A ***graphic designer*** is needed during implementation of the site for limited redesign of the LARS to LIN site, inclusion of LIBN in LIN, and inclusion of new services and web pages in the future. This person will work closely with the content expert and programmer. This position requires a degree in Graphic Design with experience in web design. An initial level of effort of about 10 days will be necessary for a graphic designer who should be hired on a freelance basis for up to \$125/day. Total initial cost would be \$1,250.

A ***programmer*** will develop the database application and interfaces for LIBN. The programmer will work closely with the content expert to develop an automated response system to communicate with visitors, as well as work closely with the graphic designer regarding GUI. The programmer will enter all updates of the site. This position requires a degree in software engineering or computer science with previous experience in web programming. A programmer can either be hired on a freelance basis for initial development of LIBN for between \$500-700, followed by 1 day per week at \$125/day, or alternatively Indevco's in-house IT Department could be used. Under either option, total cost would be \$7,200. annually.

Phase 2: Personnel hired for the project should be able to reasonably implement the site within one month. The site will require refining the graphical user interface of LARS web site to Lebanese International Network (LIN), developing and programming LIBN within the LIN site, developing a response system for communication with visitors,

registering LIBN domain name (\$35/year), and register LIBN and LIN on search engines (\$75 each).

Phase 3: With the site on screen, leaders of local business associations should be recruited to serve on a LIBN Advisory Board. This board will be responsible for the marketing and promotion of LIBN within the local community, as well as abroad, where possible. Likewise, an Executive Committee, with representation from LARS, Indevco Foundation, and others, should be formed for content and strategic decision-making related to the site.

Phase 4: Marketing – online and through traditional means – is the next critical step. An initial awareness campaign should be allotted \$5000 or more. The content expert will implement the LIBN marketing plan in conjunction with the current Online Marketing Plan for LARS’ “social support information” site (see attached) and conduct research regularly to expand and accommodate the international focus needed to reach expatriates worldwide. S/he will also be responsible for a systematic marketing plan using printed promotional materials. Members of the Advisory Board, as mentioned, will also be responsible for formally and informally marketing the site.

Total Cost Estimate: Estimated start-up costs and first year operating costs:

Staff: Content Expert:	2 days per week @ \$700/month:	\$ 8,400.
Graphic Designer:	10 days @ \$125/day (for start-up):	\$ 1,250.
Programmer	\$500-700, start-up followed by 1 day per week at \$125/day:	\$ 7,200.
Domain name registration:	\$35 p.a.	\$ 35.
Search engine registration:	LIBN, LIN @ \$ 75 each	\$ 150.
Marketing (print, brochures first month)		\$ 5,000.
- (exchanged links free)		
- conference participation		\$ 1,000.
Miscellaneous (10%)		<u>\$ 2,300.</u>
Total cost, start-up and year one		\$ 25,338.
Site Completion and Launch		

The technical development of LIBN should be completed between February and April 2000, including staff hiring, technical design, advisory board recruitment and initial promotion and marketing.

This is to allow LIBN to be “formally” launched during the major conference for key business leaders of the Lebanese overseas diaspora, scheduled for 5-9 June 2000 at the Phoenician Hotel in Ein El Mreisse, Beirut. This conference is being organized by the Office of the Prime Minister with the participation of the Ministries of Economy and Trade, Emigration, and Tourism. Several hundred influential business leaders from the Lebanese diaspora worldwide are being recruited to attend the conference primarily through promotional activities of Lebanese embassies and consulates abroad.

This conference would provide an ideal opportunity to launch and promote LIBN to a critical audience of key Lebanese expatriate business leaders. Participation at the conference should be agreed on with the Conference organizers, including possibly a “demonstration” booth, as well as a scheduled presentation to conference participants either at a common full session, or at each individual sectoral working group on financial services, tourism, agribusiness, etc.

ANNEX C

LIBN Internet/Web Links

**Prepared by Lebanese American University
Center for Sponsored Research and Development
June 2000**

Information and Networking for Lebanese Businesses

This document compiles a list of Internet websites that provide online information and networking services of interest to business enterprises in Lebanon. These online services cover a range of different areas – from private sector sites that advertise goods and services, to government sites which provide statistical, economic, and commercial data. This list is meant to serve as a starting point for establishing a network of Lebanese businesses on the Internet.

As the web is very dynamic and ever-changing, this list is only partial, and it by no means covers all of the potential Internet resources that are available for Lebanese businesses. The websites are organized into the following categories: government websites; business-related websites; private company websites; association & organization websites; and miscellaneous websites.

Government Websites

<http://www.bdl.gov.lb/>

The website of the National Bank of Lebanon provides all types of information regarding the Lebanese economy: rates and yields, economic data, laws and circulars, publications, etc.

<http://www.economy.gov.lb/>

This is the website for the Lebanese Ministry of Economy and Trade, with information ranging from publications, services, and events to indicators, recent decrees, and regulations.

<http://www.embofleb.org/>

This website of the Lebanese Embassy in Washington is designed to:

- Provide information on Lebanon to potential investors and tourists.
- Encourage the return of qualified Lebanese living abroad and help Lebanese companies locate them in the countries where they presently live.

- Give up-to-date news about Lebanon and about the Lebanese community's abroad, particularly the Lebanese-American community. Events, whether personal or business-related, can be advertised for free in this section.
- Offer some general information about Lebanon, particularly for persons not very familiar with the country.
- Provide links to other websites on Lebanon.

<http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/~lebanon-liban/trdinf-e.htm>

Trade information on Lebanon from the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade website.

<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/sitc1/1997/c5040.htm>

Information and data from the U.S. Census Bureau on U.S. trade with Lebanon.

Business-Related Websites

<http://www.bse.com.lb/>

The Beirut stock exchange's website provides statistical and economic information regarding the market, authorized dealers, and agreements with other stock exchanges.

<http://www.lebanonweb.com/homepage/moet/business.html>

Website of *Business Lebanon*, Lebanon's official economic magazine.

<http://www.euroyellowpages.com/exhibitn/trade/lebanon.html>

A directory of businesses in Lebanon.

<http://tradeport.org/ts/countries/lebanon/>

A U.S.-based website called "TradePort," which provides market research reports, industry sector analysis, and other business and trade-related information on Lebanon and countries around the world.

<http://www.lebanonlinks.net>

Links to different business-related sites in Lebanon.

<http://www.lebanon.com/directory/index.htm>

An online directory of Lebanese businesses.

<http://thepage.simplenet.com/leb/busi/l-busi-e.htm>

This website provides links to Lebanese commercial websites.

Private Company Websites

<http://www.netliban.com/webservc.htm>

NetCom Systems is the Lebanese Sister Company of the American-based CompuNet Systems, a major network systems integrator in California, USA. The company consists of a professional group of computer and networking specialists, who provide IT Consulting, Network Integration, Inter/Intranet Application Development, and support to companies doing business locally, nationally, and globally.

<http://www.cat.com.lb/>

The mission of the C.A.T. group is to offer expert contracting services, based on up-to-date knowledge, quality assurance, safety, cost awareness, and on-time delivery.

<http://www.lecico.com.lb/>

Lecico produces a wide range of ceramic products (e.g., sanitary ware products such as bathroom and kitchen fixtures and ceramic wall and floor tiles).

<http://www.audi.com.lb/>

Audi Bank is one of the major commercial banks of Lebanon. On its website, the bank provides its own economic data about the Lebanese economy.

<http://www.dm.net.lb/byblosbk/>

Website of Byblos Bank.

<http://www.dm.net.lb/>

Established in 1984, Data Management is a data communication provider & the first company in Lebanon to provide value-added Internet services.

<http://www.ifp.com.lb/>

IFP is the leading organizer of International Trade Fairs in the Middle East Region, with over 20 years of international experience. The group is active throughout the Middle East, with main offices situated in Beirut, Riyadh, and Dubai.

<http://www.al-shora-international.com.lb/services.html>

Al-Shora International is a company that provides up-to-date information on management and finance for banks, financial and commercial institutions, and other industries.

<http://www.kleudge.com>

Kleudge is a Lebanese Internet, software, and desktop publishing company.

<http://www.ahassociates.com/lebanon.html>

International consulting firm Arthur Houghton Associates, Inc. (AHA) is a leading public relations, marketing, and strategic management consulting firm which provides services for U.S. businesses in the Middle East and for Middle Eastern businesses and government entities within the United States. AHA's geographic area of coverage includes Egypt and North Africa, Lebanon, and the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf.

Association & Organization Websites

<http://www.ccib.org.lb/>

This is the website for the Lebanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and it presents information on the Chamber's activities, services, and adherent enterprises.

<http://www.ali.org.lb/>

This is the main website for the Association of Lebanese Industrialists. Founded in 1943, ALI is a Lebanese economic organization grouping industrialists from all regions of the country in a concerted and balanced effort at promoting and developing industry in Lebanon. The association seeks to create and maintain an atmosphere that is favorable to industrial growth and development.

<http://freelebanon.org/>

The United States Committee for a Free Lebanon (USCFL) is a non-profit, non-sectarian Organization with three primary functions: research and education; human rights; and humanitarian activities.

<http://lcps-lebanon.org/>

The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS) is an independent, non-profit research institute based in Beirut. Its mission is to provide policy research on issues relevant to political, social, and economic development in Lebanon and the Arab

World. LCPS publishes studies and organizes conferences that analyze and aim to improve public policy. It also publishes material to increase public awareness of critical policy issues.

<http://www.laa.org/>

The Lebanese-American Association (LAA) is a California nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting Lebanese heritage in the United States and bringing together the Lebanese community for a variety of cultural, educational, and charitable events. This website provides links to various Lebanese sites all over the world.

<http://www.foliage-sys.com/ales/index.html>

Website of the Lebanese-American Engineering Society.

Miscellaneous Websites

<http://www.lebanon.com/>

This Lebanese website provides news and businesses information, with links to a variety of government and industry sites.

<http://www.idrel.com.lb/>

This website provides links to Lebanese news services, government offices, government data, and business and economy sites.

<http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Lakes/2670/lebanon.html>

Links to a variety of websites on Lebanon: businesses, financial institutions, education institutions, organizations, Internet providers, etc.

<http://www.mees.com/>

The Middle East Economic Survey, now in its 43rd year, is a weekly newsletter on the Middle East and North Africa, which provides news reports and up-to-date analysis of the oil and gas sectors in the Arab world, Iran, and OPEC, as well as reports on capital markets, financial and banking developments, and a weekly assessment of the political situation in the Middle East.

<http://www2.arab.net/>

An online resource of information, links, and news for the Arab world in the Middle East & North Africa.

<http://www.gates96.com/cam/asia/Lebanon/Beirut/index.html>

An index of Lebanese websites.